

Legal..

## Plave, Koch start new firm

What do President George W. Bush and attorney Lee Plave have in common?

By Staff

As published in: [Franchise Times - March 2007](#)

They both snagged partners from Wiley Rein & Fielding. Richard Wiley left the Washington, D.C., firm in February to serve as counsel to the President, and David Koch left the same month to start a law firm with Plave and John Tifford, both from DLA Piper.



**Lee Plave**

The new firm's name is Plave Koch PLC: "I had proposed Koch Plave and Dave proposed Plave Koch and he's just more persuasive," Plave deadpanned. FYI: Wiley Rein & Fielding's moniker officially changed to Wiley Rein, due to its named partner's departure.

Leaving the world's third-largest law firm and its resources to start the "third-smallest firm on the planet" wasn't an easy decision, Plave says. "At the end of February, it would have been 20 years," with the same firm—more or less. In 1987, Plave started with Brownstein, Zeidman & Schomer, which merged with Piper Rudnick, which merged with DLA—and a few other firms through the years.

"Clients have responded very favorably and it seems that most, if not all, will ask to transfer to the new firm," Plave says. "I remain a huge fan of DLA Piper...and we intend to have an ongoing relationship with both firms."

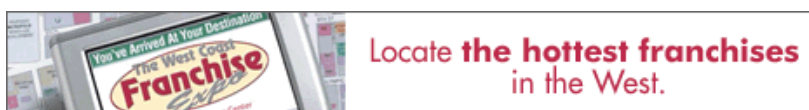
Plave Koch is located in Reston, Va., just 500 yards from DLA Piper's offices.

And, although it is just one month old, Plave Koch is already newsworthy: "I suspect we're the only franchise firm with three former FTC attorneys," Plave says. "A distinction that is largely without merit, I presume."

Tifford's joining was a natural. For the past two decades, Plave says he's always been down the hall from Tifford, first at the FTC and then at the law firm(s). While Tifford's specialty is the FTC, Plave's is technology and Koch's antitrust. "Over time we'll add additional folks," Plave says.

The two principals talked about starting their own firm for a decade before sketching out the details during a break in a professional hockey game two years ago.

"Ten years ago I wouldn't have expected to find myself this entrepreneurial...but after nearly 20 years in franchising, watching people risk their money and take a leap of faith to start a business, it seems that we, too, have caught the virus," Plave says.



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